

Liaison

Library Association News-Sheet

News Editors: R. G. Surridge and D. R. Jamieson

December, 1959

D.S.I.R. Criticised over New Lending Library Committee

THE way in which D.S.I.R. has chosen the membership of the Consultative Committee for the National Lending Library has aroused strong criticisms from the L.A.

It was reported last month that during the meeting in July between an L.A. delegation and the Secretary and senior officers of D.S.I.R., Sir Harry Melville announced the formation of a Consultative Committee for the N.L.L., and he invited the L.A. to submit its views on the staffing of the Library to that Committee. A Memorandum setting out the L.A.'s views on this point was sent during October; the terms of reference and the composition of the Consultative Committee were made known on 16th November.

Committee of sixteen

D.S.I.R. has provided for a Committee comprising a Chairman, a Deputy Chairman and not more than fifteen members "appointed in their individual capacities but selected so as to be broadly representative of the different subject fields and the main groups of users of the N.L.L." The purpose of the Committee is "to advise the Secretary of D.S.I.R., from the point of view of the users of the Library, on the services to be provided and to make recommendations for the modification or extension of the Library's services". The Committee will meet at least once a year; its members are appointed for three years, but "the future of the Committee will be reviewed before the end of this period".

One F.L.A.

The present Chairman of the Aslib Council and the Research Officer of Aslib are two of the fifteen ordinary members of the Consultative Committee; three other members serve on the Aslib Research Committee. The only chartered librarian is the City Librarian of Manchester, Mr. D. I. Colley, who serves on the A.M.C.'s Libraries Committee but who is neither a member of the L.A. Council nor of its committees.

The general expression of disappointment and criticism centres on the point that since the L.A. represents over ten thousand members from all types of libraries, it is extremely difficult to see how D.S.I.R. should have thought it right to appoint to the Consultative Committee no-one who is prominent in the national affairs of the Library Association.

The Executive Committee was not inclined to accept the position without a murmur, and came very firmly to the decision to send a letter to D.S.I.R. protesting that the present composition of the Consultative Committee was unrepresentative.

Appointments to Consultative Committee on page 106

M.P.'s Question Minister on Roberts Report.

Questions were put by M.P.'s to the Minister of Education, during November, on implementing the recommendations of the Roberts Report. Questions were put by Capt. Kerby (Arundel and Shoreham, C.), Mr. George Brown (Belper, L.), and by Mr. T. L. Iremonger (Ilford North, C.). A request to the Minister for the same information was sent by the L.A. on the 29th October.

To these questions Sir David Eccles has replied that he is considering the views of the bodies most affected by the Report but that he "is anxious that there should be no unnecessary delay before he puts forward firm proposals on the recommendations".

Anxiety over Increased Cost of *Chemical Abstracts*

A letter from the City Librarians of Birmingham, Glasgow, Manchester, Sheffield, Leeds, Bristol and Edinburgh has asked the L.A. to approach the American Chemical Society about the rise in the subscription rates to *Chemical Abstracts* which come into effect next year (noted in September *Liaison*).

From January 1960 the annual rate to a public library in this country for *Chemical Abstracts* with Indexes will be \$570 (£207); up till January 1956 the same service cost a public library in U.K. £25 10s. The price to teaching institutions correspondingly rises to \$150 (£53 10s.).

The letter asked that representations be made that the differential rate of subscriptions as between teaching bodies and the public libraries should be replaced by a uniform rate to all institutional subscriptions.

Although the Council agreed with this suggestion and instructed that a letter be sent to the American Chemical Society on these lines, it was an agreement tempered by the disclosure of some sobering, price comparisons thrust at them by Mr. Ardern. His figures concerned the price-per-page of three sets of publications:

L.A. Record and Liaison—2·2d. per page.

Chemical Abstracts—3d. per page.

Pergamon publications—5d. to 7d. per page.

Library Discount on Books

Court Decision Awaited

At its meeting with the representatives of the Booksellers' and Publishers Associations on 25th November, the L.A. drew attention to the vastly increased expenditure on new books by public libraries since the original Library Licence Agreement fixed the discount at 10 per cent. As the book purchasing of libraries now accounted for a much higher proportion of all national spending on new books, and as the commercial libraries were allowed full trade terms, it was considered to be only just that public libraries supported from public funds should receive comparable advantages.

The L.A. representatives asked the Associations to consider increasing the library discount to 15 per cent.

Public library purchases, it was pointed out, amounted in many instances to bulk buying of a lot of titles, invariably with a local bookseller as opposed to the library suppliers; any increase in the library discount would for the most part return to the trade in the form of increased purchases of books.

The Associations promised to consider the L.A.'s proposal, but said that it would not be possible to give a final answer until the Restrictive Practices Court had decided upon the validity of the Net Books Agreement upon which the Library Licence rests. A ruling from the Court cannot be expected for another twelve months.

Membership of Consultative Committee for the National Lending Library

Professor Sir Lindor G. Brown, C.B.E., F.R.S. (*Chairman*) Jodrell Professor of Physiology, London University; Vice President and Biological Secretary, Royal Society.

Professor J. D. Bernal, F.R.S., Professor of Physics, London University; Member, Aslib Research Committee.

Mr. D. I. Colley, F.L.A., Librarian, Manchester Public Libraries.

Dr. B. M. Crowther, M.A., F.Inst.P., Editor, *Science Abstracts*.

Mr. G. H. Davison, Secretary, Research and Development Dept., United Steel Companies Ltd.

Dr. R. E. Fairbairn, Intelligence Officer and Head of Library Dept., I.C.I. Dyestuffs Division; Chairman of Aslib Council.

Mr. R. M. Fishenden, B.A., Science Administration Office, U.K. Atomic Energy Research Establishment; Member, Aslib Research Committee.

Professor G. Gee, F.R.S., Sir Samuel Hall Professor of Chemistry, Manchester University.

Mr. C. W. Hanson, B.Sc., F.Linf. Sci., Research Officer, Aslib.

Mr. L. J. H. Haylor, M.Sc., A.C.G.I., A.M.I.E.E., Head of Technical Information and Liaison, Ministry of Aviation.

Mr. K. W. Humphreys, B.Litt., M.A., Librarian, Birmingham University; Secretary, SCONUL.

Dr. D. D. Morgan, Information Manager, Production Engineering Research Association.

Professor W. T. J. Morgan, F.R.S., Professor of Biochemistry, London University; Deputy Director, Lister Institute of Preventive Medicine; Member, Aslib Research Committee.

Mr. H. T. Pledge, B.A., Keeper, Science Museum Library.

Dr. M. R. Pollock, National Institute for Medical Research.

Mr. A. C. Townsend, M.A., Deputy Keeper, Library of Natural History Dept., British Museum.

The Literature Engineer Flies Out

Aslib Proceedings for October carries an interesting series of notes on visits which were by Mr. R. Sewell, Information Officer of United Steel Companies, to technical libraries and information services in Germany, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Belgium. Throughout Germany and Holland Mr. Sewell found a strong, persistent awareness of what literature searching and organized resources of information mean in terms of technical progress and saving money. A similar atmosphere existed in the places visited in Luxembourg, but was not so apparent in Belgium.

As "a striking example of the colossal waste of time and money" caused by lack of proper attention to published information, Mr. Sewell quotes an authoritative estimate that less than one third of German patent applications are being granted. On the other hand, R.K.W., the German productivity agency, has coined such slogans as "First inform, then produce," and "Asking is not a sign of ignorance, but of interest in progress," and makes special efforts to prevent industry from duplicating research and development work.

German thoroughness

With a high assessment of the value of information, Germany puts emphasis on "highly qualified staff and the best equipment" to exploit its use and to cope with the prodigious output. As an example of this growth Mr. Sewell quotes the journal *Stahl und Eisen*, which in 1957 was four times its 1948 size. It is hardly surprising to learn that the specially trained and experienced people preferred for information work are now frequently referred to as literature or documentation engineers.

The author did not accept uncritically all he saw. One library is described as "disappointingly small"; of the library of the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community, in Luxembourg, he comments that "the rules are extremely complex, strict and often unnecessarily detailed . . . orders have sometimes to be made out in sextuplicate". At another organization he was told that library staff did not undertake literature or patent searches "because it was not possible to guarantee that the search would be 100 per cent complete". Mr. Sewell says frankly, "I felt this was another example of German thoroughness exercised to a degree as actually to impede progress."

Another point to draw comment was the practice, which is quite common on the Continent today,

for research workers, engineers and even senior technical people to be responsible for supplying their information departments with abstracts made from the journals they read. "I felt," says the writer, "this was a good feature in the case of national research bodies, such as the Gmelin Institute, but was not perhaps the most efficient way of using laboratory staff's time in an industrial organization". At one research organization it was found that graduates were glad to do a couple of years "cheap labour" on the abstracting service in order to gain literature experience.

"Library mechanism" was a term that cropped up in the Continental jargon to describe the administrative routines, classification and cataloguing. At the Dutch Patent Office a librarian and three assistants managed both the "mechanism" and the patent searching. Royal Dutch Shell, on the other hand, employed 18 staff for the "mechanism" in their library at The Hague, the classification being in the hands of three subject specialists having degrees. A bit of mechanism, of a slightly different sort, which drew Mr. Sewell's envy, was a special arrangement by which the Netherlands national documentation institute (NIDER) can obtain U.S. government reports through the Netherlands military attaché in Washington, quicker, in certain cases, than we can through U.K. official channels.

Not surprisingly, Mr. Sewell detected no resistance in Holland to the use of microfilm readers; during his visit to the Metaalinstitut, Delft, he found little if any interest in microcards—thanks, possibly, to the influence of Dr. van der Wolk. His hosts in Belgium gave some figures on the age of material used in enquiries; the figures have a familiar ring, but are worth repeating. Seventy-one per cent of the material used was under one year old—23 per cent under 10 years—6 per cent was over 25 years old.

On-the-spot talks

Royal Dutch Shell, at The Hague, presented an example of information service on the grand scale. Staff from their Literature Searching Division frequently fly out to sites in Europe and the Near East to get an on-the-spot picture of the problems that Shell engineers are tackling and to discuss with them what information they need at the various levels of the job. The Division employs 15 graduates and 10 assistants, deals with between fifteen and thirty enquiries of various sizes a month and each call for a literature survey will produce a report of ten to sixty pages long.

All this is a far cry, no doubt, from the local Ref., which might be thought to be a good reason for reading the article in full.

FILMS AND TIME STUDIES OF CHARGING METHODS

The study team from Manchester College of Science and Technology, who are carrying out a comparative investigation of the various methods used by all types of libraries for recording the loan of books (see September *Liaison*), are coming to the end of their field-work and have reported on their progress so far.

Browne in reverse

The three-man team consists of two members of the Work Study section of the College, together with Mr. F. N. Hogg, the Senior Lecturer in the School of Librarianship. Starting in July this year, the team's aim was to see as many as possible of the different methods in action under normal working conditions. At the time of this interim report they had visited public libraries at Coventry, Crewe, Croydon, Hampstead, Holborn, Hull, Leicester, Oxford, St. Pancras, Sale, Sutton and Cheam, Swindon, Wandsworth, Westminster and Worthing; and the Library of Hull University. Between them these libraries demonstrated in action the Browne, Reverse Browne (dare one admit to not knowing what this is?), Photocharging, Punched card charging, Token charging, and—experimentally—Audio charging. Accurate time studies were logged of some operations and in a number of cases 16 mm. films were shot. By the end of October a large mass of data had been collected and this is now being sifted and analyses made of the filmed operations.

A final report is expected from the team early in the New Year, but the investigators say encouragingly that on the basis of their work to date some conclusions are already beginning to take shape.

Similar study in U.S.A.

The Manchester team note in their interim report that coincidentally John Diebold and Associates are pursuing a similar enquiry into book charging methods in the U.S.A., with the aid of a \$6,000 grant from the Council on Library Resources. (A point of dissimilarity is that the British investigation is being carried out on the equivalent of about \$600.) The team have been in correspondence with the Americans and it is expected that their work will be referred to in Manchester's final report.

East London Libraries

Readers interested in the Public and Special libraries of East London, will enjoy a recently published article on them by J. G. O'Leary (Dagenham). We mention it because it knits libraries into the social pattern of the area and it appears in a new twice yearly periodical known to few outside the area. This journal is *East London Papers* and the article appears in Vol. 2, No. 1.

Biography of L. S. Jast

Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers is at the moment busily engaged in gathering information for his biography of L. S. Jast. He is particularly keen on obtaining, for a very short loan period, any letters that were written either to or by Mr. Jast.

Anyone who possesses such correspondence is asked to forward it to: Mr. W. C. B. Sayers,

52 Blenheim Court,
South Croydon.

Cameras out at Dudley

A photographic survey organized by the Dudley Public Library is being carried out. Volunteer photographers are assisting in this survey and they aim to build up a comprehensive picture of the borough as it is today. This project has been linked in Dudley with an exhibition, at a local cinema, which contains prints and photographs to record the Borough's history. This has been divided into three parts, the first section illustrates entertainments and fetes, the second, the market place and the last the High Street.

Work with Young People

The only full-time course of its kind in Britain, one of six weeks' duration on Library Work with Young People is being planned at the North Western Polytechnic (jointly with the Youth Libraries Section), for 25th April to 3rd June, 1960. Miss J. Butler (Herts. County) will act as course tutor, assisted by specialist lecturers.

Forms of application and information on hostel accommodation may be obtained from Mr. P. H. Sewell (Head of Department of Librarianship). Leave of absence with pay was given to most students in previous years and grants for fees and living expenses were obtained from educational funds, or under Section 8 of the N.J.C. Scheme of Conditions of Service.

A Penman's Masterpiece

Mr. F. G. B. Hutchings, City Librarian of Leeds writes: "Priscilla Johnston's life of her father, Edward Johnston, the great calligrapher and the mainspring for Eric Gill and others who sought to make lettering a thing of beauty, is a book which any librarian who enjoys the intimacy of the letter and the feeling of the man who designed it should read.

On page 251 of the book the following occurs: "The first important manuscript in the compressed hand seems to have been the magnificent roll of honour for Keighley which Johnston wrote in 1924. He did few real books in his life, and few large, important commissions such as one could list as 'principle works'. The majority of his manuscripts were booklets or single sheets for framing. The Keighley Roll of Honour was an exception. It was a large book and must have been one of the biggest pieces of work he ever did. It was when this was being bound by Douglas Cockerell that Emery Walker wrote: 'Spooner says D.C. is binding the most magnificent specimen of modern calligraphy that he has ever had the good fortune to see.' Cockerell must have written in the same vein, for Johnston replied to him: 'I greatly value your encomium of the MS., judging you to be a fair and experienced critic. I feel curiously unresponsive, however, for its virtues (such as they are) which come mainly from the pen and the vellum (such as it is). Had the vellum been better, the manuscript would have been better and I happier. Nevertheless you encourage me.' In another letter he said of this great work, 'I believe it is all there but I myself am scarcely so, after about three months of work, getting intenser and intenser.'"

"Might have been done better"

This book is to be seen in the Reference Library at Keighley. How should it have happened that Keighley possesses this outstanding example of Johnston's work? It would appear that the Principal of the School of Art, John E. Sunderland, was a Johnston enthusiast and by some happy coincidence he was co-opted on the Committee concerned with the memorial for those killed in the 1914 War and with the Roll of Honour. At the end of the book there is a self-effacing note by Johnston himself: "Had more time been available it might have been better done, though time itself might not do justice to the names inscribed."

White rose of York

Liaison wrote to the Chief Librarian of Keighley, Mr. F. Taylor, who provided the following information:

"The Roll of Honour was provided from funds subscribed by the citizens of Keighley. The Roll of Honour contains approximately 900 names, and measures 15½ in. by 12 in. and is 1½ in. thick. The outer covering is of grey-blue Morocco leather, with silver-gilt clasps and protective corner-pieces. Decorative devices include the white rose of York, repeated eight times in the central device, constituting a circular border for the inscription "1914-1918", also seven times down the spine.

The black letter writing is offset in places by ornamental letters in gold, red and blue. The cost was approximately £250. The Roll of Honour is on permanent display in the Reference Library and one leaf is turned over each day."

Mr. Henrik Jones Saves the Situation

A serious position developed at the Brighton School of Librarianship when Mr. W. H. C. Lockwood, the only full-time member of the staff there, was taken seriously ill about two months ago, at a critical time just before the Winter examinations.

Shortly after Mr. Lockwood fell ill, Mr. D. C. Henrik Jones retired from the Chaucer House staff and, by the most fortunate chance for the Brighton School as it turned out, agreed to step into the breach there and then. For sheer speed in going into retirement and coming out of it again Mr. Jones must have put up one of the fastest times on record.

In jeopardy

The Education Committee heard of Mr. Jones's action with obvious admiration and appreciation. To the very sincere regrets that were expressed over Mr. Lockwood's illness were added regrets that the very risk of such a situation arising had been allowed to exist for so long. Since his appointment at Brighton after the war, Mr. Lockwood has been the only full-time member of the teaching staff at the School of Librarianship, and his representations to the authorities for additional full-time staff have never been met. The Education Committee were unanimous in deploring the fact that the authorities had not augmented the staff earlier and as a consequence had jeopardized the teaching of some members of the Library Association.

An approach is being made by the L.A. direct to the College Principal.

P.R.A. Advocates "School" for Regional Information Officers



Mr. M. Higgins

At his first attendance at a Council meeting since his appointment, the Public Relations Adviser, Mr. Michael Higgins, submitted a report giving his views on the general picture of "publicity and the library" and made the following recommendations:

- (a) Appointment and training of Regional Information Officers
- (b) More publicity for Branch meetings
- (c) Selective publicity for Section meetings
- (d) Improved publicity for the annual conference
- (e) A series of articles, scripts and broadcasts instigated by the L.A.
- (f) A drive to get more publicity for the non-public libraries.

First, we must learn

Mr. Higgins stressed the value of a sound press-relations sense, especially at the local level, and he urged that priority be given to the first recommendation. If we are to get the most out of the national and local lines of publicity it is essential that we first take some trouble to learn something of what makes news and how press and broadcasting cover it. The P.R.A. suggested that Branch Secretaries should become Regional Information Officers and should be "sent to school" to learn the elements of the job. Mr. Higgins outlined an intensive three-day course (9.30 to 5 p.m.) covering news from the point of view of the newspaper, television and radio; the use of pictures and short films; and exercises in writing news stories and feature articles.

These suggestions were accepted and Mr. Higgins is to draw up plans for the first of these courses to be held early next spring.

Blackpool Blacklisted

The subject of blacklisting, of which little has been heard in recent months, arose at the November Membership Committee. The advertisement in the *Times Literary Supplement*, for a Reference Librarian at Blackpool, at a salary scale of A.P.T. I, has met with strong protests by the L.A. The L.A. has adopted its normal blacklisting policy by protesting to the authority and has inserted an advertisement in the *T.L.S.* for 27th November, recommending members not to apply. A full statement will appear later.

A report was also received that the S.M.C.C.L. had made representations to Cumberland County requesting that the post of County Librarian be regraded from A.P.T. IV to not less than Grade C.

A.P.T. Decision in Spring?

There is little further to report on the new grading award on which our representatives are currently engaged with NALGO, other than that it is expected that the decision at the National Joint Council will probably be made in the early Spring of 1960.

The Establishing and Grading Census taken in July, 1959, reported the effect of the January A.P.T. II award. Of a total of 140 posts, only 97 were directly upgraded to A.P.T. II as a result of the award. A summary of this census and an earlier one taken in September 1957, which shows the variations in the grading of professional posts in public libraries, was discussed by the Membership Committee and it was decided to publish this comparative statement in the *Record*.

Magliabechi Should be Pleased

That the Library Association, of all people, should lumber into print once a year with such a typographically unenterprising document as its annual report, appalled *The Bookseller's* columnist Magliabechi (as reported in the *September Liaison*). Approaching the same document from a rather different angle, the Secretary came to a similar conclusion that the current manner of presenting the report leaves much to be desired.

Mr. Barry passed some quiet strictures on the typography and layout of the report and then went on to comment on some of the extraneous items (that such-and-such a Branch took tea with the Mayor) that have been solemnized in print.

The Executive Committee authorized the Secretary to give a new look to the annual report he will be drafting for 1959. Physical presentation will be improved and the report will primarily record the work of the Council, with the addition of any branch or section developments that are of significance.

LOW-COST BOOKS FOR OVERSEAS

On 16th November Dr. Hill announced on behalf of the Government the membership of the Advisory Committee on the selection of low-priced books for overseas. The job of this committee will be to recommend to Ministers of overseas departments titles of books that will be produced with the benefit of a Government subsidy and be sold abroad well below cost price, particularly in India, Pakistan, and in parts of Africa where students, teachers, and others cannot afford to pay an economic price for English classics and textbooks. The names of the members are:

Mr. A. L. P. Norrington (Chairman), President of Trinity College

Sir Basil Blackwell, Past President of the B.A.

Mr. J. Cooper, National Union of General and Municipal Workers

Professor Lionel Elvin, Director of Institute of Education, London University

Professor Michael Grant, Vice-Chancellor, Queens University, Belfast

Sir Percival Griffiths

Sir Cyril Hinshelwood, President of Royal Society

Mr. M. Hornby, Chairman of N.B.L.

Mr. L. R. McColvin

Mr. D. H. McLachlan, Deputy Editor of *Daily Telegraph*

Mr. A. P. Pryce-Jones, formerly editor of *T.L.S.*

Sir Stanley Walter Rawson

Miss C. V. Wedgwood, former President of the English Association.

Twenty more British Council libraries

On the same day Dr. Hill reported progress on the proposals contained in the White Paper on overseas information published earlier this year. He said that expenditure on British Council libraries was £234,000 for 1958-9 and would be about £480,000 for 1959-60. In the same two years expenditure on books and periodicals for presentation would rise from £39,000 to £72,000.

In consultation with the Governments concerned twenty new British Council libraries had been or would shortly be set up. Long-lending library services for students were now operating or would shortly operate at nine Council centres and through Universities.

In India, one new Library was in process of being set up in Bangalore and three more were planned. A large store of sets of textbooks was being formed in Bombay for long loan to students through the existing Council libraries at Delhi, Calcutta and Bombay and through the Universities. Over 30,000 books had been sent out and 235 additional subscriptions to periodicals provided for Council libraries in India since 1st April, 1959. Borrowings were reported to be heavy.

In Pakistan two new libraries had been opened or were about to open in Rawalpindi and Chittagong. The Council was planning to open three more in 1960-61. Libraries of the long-lending type were already operating in Karachi, Rawalpindi and Dacca and in process of being extended to Lahore and Chittagong. First indications were that these were a great success. Nearly 40,000 books and 104 additional subscriptions to periodicals had been provided for Council libraries in Pakistan since 1st April.

New Council libraries had also been opened at Hargeisa in the Somaliland Protectorate, at Mogadishu in Somalia and at Addis Ababa. Libraries would be opened in the near future in Ceylon, Uganda, Tanganyika, Nigeria, Libya, Iran, Nepal and Viet Nam.

English English

"Perhaps in few other non-English-speaking countries", writes the Bonn correspondent of *The Times*, "is there such a large audience eager not only to improve its English but willing to learn more about its enigmatic neighbour." At the height of the Allied occupation there existed some 69 English libraries; by October of this year, when the British Council takes over the cultural work of the embassy, the number will have run down to 30 and only two of these will be the direct responsibility of the Council, and, equally, a direct charge to the British taxpayer. The remainder will be the responsibility of west German bodies—the Dusseldorf branch is already flourishing under local sponsorship, in Bonn the town authorities have taken over, and in Aachen the local British-German Society.

"Generally speaking west Germany now looks westwards, but towards the U.S.A. and not Britain, except in the pronunciation of English; English English, as it is called, is still preferred. Yet there are many west Germans with other interests in Britain and things British. Most of all they are hungry for new writing, and they seek pleasure and stimulation in original English works. The attraction of the language will remain when the libraries come under west German sponsorship, but their passing as British centres should not go unnoticed."

Desperate shortage of children's librarians

It is the opinion of one plaintiff that we are approaching a real crisis over the shortage of children's librarians. In a circular letter, Mr. Jack Dove (Hove) states that he advertised twice in August and twice in September for a junior librarian. "Two applications were received, one from a bookseller's assistant in his late forties and one from an active middle-aged man, employed in the technical field, who cannot spell, nor write and who is without address."

Poor response

Checking on advertisements for similar vacancies in the T.L.S. during the six months from 1st April this year, Mr. Dove found that "forty-one authorities had advertised for children's librarians on APT I, and only fourteen of these have managed to fill their vacancies". Keighly, Islington, Rotherham, East Riding, Cheltenham and Montgomeryshire regarded the posts to APT II but the two county authorities are still without qualified children's librarians.

The importance of having trained librarians with a love of children's literature in charge of children's libraries and school library services needs to be restated, says Mr. Dove. This is unquestionably a specialist job, yet there are critics in plenty who believe that anyone can deal with children's reading. They would be rapidly disillusioned if they tried—which it is to be hoped they will not. The interests of the present day child are far wider than those of previous generations: his opportunities are more and the number of books available to him can be counted in thousands. "Adequate guidance is therefore vital and therein lies the very essence of our work."

"I want to see a recruitment drive for library staffs on ambitious lines, for I believe that we have something to offer and that we do make a valuable contribution to the communities we serve. But the conditions and incentive must be there first."

Will it happen here?

The penalty for failing to create conditions which will alleviate the shortage among children's librarians Mr. Dove puts this way. "During our recent tour of Sweden, I came across a brand new branch library, closed on a Saturday afternoon because of insufficient staff. The trouble? Not the training programme, but the salaries. It could happen here."

Rating of Libraries

The Minister of Housing and Local Government was asked by Mr. Wyatt (Bosworth) on 12th November whether he would introduce legislation to relieve from rating libraries which exist primarily for the purpose of learning and scholarship.

In a written reply the Minister said that evidence on the rating of libraries was submitted to the Pritchard Committee on the Rating of Charities and Kindred Bodies, whose report had recently been presented. The recommendations of that Committee were now being considered by the Government.

B.N.B. South Africa

A quarterly bibliography of books currently published in and about the Union of South Africa, called *Africana Nova*, has been published by the Cape Town Public Library since September 1958.

This bibliography is a continuation of the classified list published since 1956 in the *Quarterly Bulletin* of the South African Public Library. Based on accessions of the Africana Department of that Library and including material received by legal deposit, it had reached such proportions after 12 years that the library decided to print it as an independent bibliographical serial. Its coverage has been extended to include certain categories of material, e.g. school books, previously omitted, and it now purports to cover all books and pamphlets published in S. Africa. It is arranged by U.D.C. and produced photographically.

Occasional Microcards

Supplies of microcards to cover the Occasional Papers Nos. 1-12 at the North Western Polytechnic are now available. Two papers appear on each card which will be sold at 1s. 6d.—the price is therefore the same as the originals, i.e., 9d. a paper. The Polytechnic is possibly the first British organization to issue a series of publications in this form.

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The first issue of *Library Research in Progress* has been published by the U.S. Office of Education. *LiRiP's* primary aim is "to report new and less publicized library research" and it reports in this issue nearly 80 projects which were being pursued in the first half of this year. With a very few exceptions the work reported has all been sponsored in the U.S.A.

It is noted in this new bulletin that abstracts of doctoral dissertations in library science accepted by American Library Schools between 1950 and 1959, as well as a bibliography of all dissertations in this field before 1950, will be published in the near future by the Library Services Branch of the U.S. Office of Education.

Controversial Conference?

A move to depart from the present practice of annual conferences, to having a conference every three years, was initiated by Miss L. V. Paulin (Herts. County). The proposal met with the support of the Membership Committee but at the full Council an equal vote for and against the suggestion, left the Chairman, Mr. McColvin with the casting vote. In this unenviable position, Mr. McColvin used his vote to reject the recommendation and ensured the continuance of an annual conference.

"Let's have a rumble"

Themes for the Scarborough Conference dominated the Conference Committee in November. The hope for a more controversial conference than those of recent years was instanced by Mr. T. E. Callender (Croydon) who admitted that his heart "was young and gay" and regretted the fact that "we haven't had a rumble for ages". This attitude, coupled with the attendance for the first time of the Public Relations Adviser, who stressed that if the Association desired wide publicity for its Conference it would need to consider important matters which are either in the minds of the general public or could influence the kind of public service that it receives, doubtless influenced the committee in its discussions. The final decision will be made at the January meeting.

Invitations have been received from Dublin and Margate for the 1961 Conference. At a previous meeting the Council had received an offer from Belfast which is at present engaged upon a comprehensive report on the facilities available for such an event. All three offers will be dealt with in January.

* * *

Mr. B. C. Vickery, Librarian of I.C.I. Plastics Division, has been elected President of the new International Continuing Committee for Information Retrieval and Machine Translation; the committee will include representatives from nine other countries, among them Russia, Japan, the Netherlands and U.S.A.

Piccadilly to Persia. Miss J. M. Fitch resigned as assistant librarian at the Chemical Society in London to fly out to Persia at the beginning of November on a two year's contract to the library of the Institute of Technology at Abadan. The present book stock there is about 6,000, of which a quarter are in Persian; it is hoped to increase the stock to 25,000.

College and Public Libraries Combine

Barrow-in-Furness

Reading the short description (in the July *Liaison*) of the newly opened combined county regional and technical college library at Heanor, Derbyshire, Mr. F. Barnes reminds us that the same principle has been employed at Barrow-in-Furness.

"Since the 1st September 1958, the central library has housed a technical library which is the library of the Central College of Further Education, as well as a public technical library.

This new library is administered as part of the borough library system, but is financed in equal parts by the Libraries and the Education Committees; the technical librarian fulfils all the functions of a college librarian. This arrangement arose from the desire to offer a good technical library service to an industrial town, and from the need to establish a college library in accordance with the Ministry of Education's Circular 322 of April 1957.

The accident of the location of the central library in the centre of the three component buildings of the college made the solution of the problem obvious."

Corby

And one of the main planning features for a modern branch library to be built at Corby, Northamptonshire, at a cost of over £53,000, is that it will provide a large technical reference library to serve the adjoining technical college and the branch library will be linked by a covered way.

Another point of interest in the plans is that much of the natural and artificial light will come from overhead, leaving the walls completely free for shelving, which in turn will provide a good measure of sound insulation.

Education librarians to meet

It has been suggested that, in this present period of great expansion of training college libraries, it would be valuable to have a special sub-section of the University and Research Section of the Library Association for Training College Librarians and Librarians of Institutes of Education.

In order to see how much practical support there is for this proposal, the Librarians of Institutes of Education have arranged a meeting to take place during the forthcoming Conference of Educational Associations. The meeting will be held at Chaucer House on Tuesday, 5th January, 1960, at 2.30 p.m., and all librarians interested in the formation of such a sub-section are invited to attend.

Orkney Readers Survive T.V. Threat

Thanks to a correspondent in the North, our attention has been directed to the Annual Report of the Orkney County Library for 1959. Our correspondent writes "that this Report records a good deal of enterprise in this far-flung part. I thought his observations on T.V. a particularly interesting account and a better statistical analysis than some such essays I have seen". The following is an extract from the Report.

Kirkwall the key

What will be the ultimate effect of television on reading in Orkney? From a study of investigations carried out elsewhere there were indications that book-borrowing from our libraries would fall quickly, and this depression would be followed by a gradual recovery levelling off in three or four years at about the present rate. During this period of readjustment one important change in reading habits would result, namely, that reading of fiction would remain well below the present level while borrowing of non-fiction would be substantially increased through interests aroused by television programmes. It was also reasonable to anticipate any such change would be more gradual in Orkney where all the smaller islands—the area particularly effected by our expanding Family Book Service—are still without the benefit of mains-supply electricity. Consequently any effect on reading during the first six months of television would be found in the use made of the central library in Kirkwall, and to a lesser degree, and probably later, throughout the rural districts of the mainland.

Half see television

At present there are 1,338 television receivers in Orkney, situated almost exclusively within the mainland. Of these 464 are in Kirkwall. This means that 43 per cent of families residing in the town possess receivers, while probably more than 50 per cent of the population have easy and regular access to television programmes. In the landward area of the mainland we estimate that 30 per cent of the households have television sets; but this area is presently so inadequately served by the library that it could be but idle pretence to attempt any study of reading habits there. The Kirkwall Library does, however, provide a live unit of service extending in influence to every parish of the mainland, and on which any change brought about by television should be immediately evident. Even at the present stage of television coverage at least half the readers using the Kirkwall Library now view the programmes as a regular part of their leisure activities—and if, as we believe, there would be found to be an incidence between the desire for television and the desire for books, the proportion of our readers effected by regular viewing would be much greater.

The immediate result of the introduction of television, as seen from the records of the Kirkwall Library, was a deterioration in borrowing after three months of 8 per cent below the book-issue figure for the same period of the previous year. Considering the former steady increase year by year in book-borrowing from the library, this would correspond to a real reduction of at least 15 per cent. In the fourth month the slide had accelerated to 12 per cent, and had braked again to 74 per cent in the fifth. Six months after the first television programme was transmitted in Orkney borrowing from the Kirkwall Library had revived and stood at the same level as the previous year. Now, after nine months of adjustment to the new conditions caused by television, reading from the library has again increased by almost 8 per cent. It may yet be too early to draw conclusions from these observations, but they do suggest that the steadily growing popularity of the library over the past few years has still impetus enough to absorb and counteract any immediate ill-effect of television. Of course this does not gainsay but merely qualifies the undoubted fact that television is greatly influencing reading in Orkney.

"Deplorable effect"

Quite different reactions were observed in the use made of library books by adults and children. The response in young people was marked by a sharp fall in the circulation of books from the Children's Library. This was, unfortunately, indicated by a greater drop in the reading of informative books as opposed to fiction; and, whereas story-reading recovered lost ground again fairly quickly, there has been no similar gain as yet in the reading of non-fiction by the children. This deplorable effect is made all the more significant by a considerable increase, during the same period, in the reading of factual books by the children in areas of the county unaffected by television. Adult readers, on the other hand, responded with a distinct depreciation in the reading of novels from the library, while the issue of non-fiction continued to increase despite or because of television. **This changing shape of adult reading has been most defined, and the borrowing of books of non-fiction now stands at 10 per cent above the issue of the corresponding, pre-television period last year.**

BRIEFLY

The lady in flannel gets a face lift. Coming back to the delicate question of the suitability of the present coat-of-arms of the Association, the Secretary reported at the November Council meetings that a designer recommended by the Slade School of Art is drawing a modification of the existing emblem; the drawing will be submitted to the Executive committee for their inspection later.

Youth was conspicuous by its absence at the opening ceremony of a Books for Youth week at **Malden** (Surrey). The only young man there went to propose a vote of thanks to the Mayor, who made a suitable comment about the youthful absentees.

Influenced, perhaps, by the fact that a runner-up for the title **Miss World** was formerly a librarian in Sweden, Mr. S. Irving, M.P., chairman of Dartford's libraries committee, has appealed for female library assistants with more glamour. Among his other suggestions for boosting the issues are neon signs outside the library, and inside study cubicles, improved and more imaginative lighting, and moveable partitions to allow flexibility in planning.

Every book added to **Birmingham's** technical library in the last quarter was an American publication. The chairman of the City's libraries committee offered this as evidence of the monopoly which, it was said, American books were gaining in the technical field. Birmingham, he said were spending hundreds of pounds in importing American technical books.

A public telephone in an acoustic hood has been installed in the entrance hall of Chaucer House. Elsewhere in the office an **electric calculator** is now provided in the Accountant's office. As an example of the economy this will offer, it was instanced that the manual compilation of the yearly Public Library Statistics usually involves about six weeks work; the machine will do the same calculations in two to three days.

Rowley Regis. The L.A. has now received a reply from Nalگو H.Q., in connection with the appointment of the Borough Librarian of Rowley Regis, to which reference has been made in previous issues of *Liaison*. The reply confirms Nalگو's view that fully qualified librarians should be appointed to posts of responsibility, and states that in this particular case the appropriate Regional Officer may have acted unwisely. The matter is considered closed.

A second channel. Lewisham and Shoreditch are two authorities who, like Birmingham (noted in the October *Liaison*), were early in the field with stereophonic records. **Shoreditch** now possess over 50 of these recordings and are using them for lunch-time concerts once a fortnight. The first stereophonic recordings to be generally issued in the U.K. was purchased by **Lewisham**, in June 1958, and their present collection of three dozen stereophonic discs does not meet the increasing demand. At **Hammersmith** it has been decided to purchase equipment for playing this type of recording.

Lewisham's experience so far is that the two-channel recordings resist wear somewhat better than standard records. Both Shoreditch and Lewisham expect that stereophonic will replace L.P.'s, just as L.P.'s have supplanted the 78 r.p.m. discs.

Reading technical college now has a library—four years after the college opened. The library opens 40 hours a week and has a full-time librarian in charge. A particular effort has been made to build up a comprehensive section on standards, and the present total of 150 periodical titles taken is to be augmented.

20-language music dictionary. The International Association of Music Libraries is collaborating with the International Musicological Society in the publication of a polyglot dictionary of musical terms. It is planned to bring out a preliminary handbook in German, English-American, Spanish, French and Italian, to be followed at a later date by a comprehensive dictionary in 20 languages.

In Sweden a **Bokbåten** (book boat) visits islands of the Stockholm archipelago. The vessel is hired, complete with cook and crew, in the spring and autumn of the year, and, fitted out with shelving and a book stock, it sails off on a 3 weeks' tour. Stowed away as well are a librarian and three assistants.

Britannica by subscription (concl).

The plan appears to be a reasonably attractive value-for-money proposition, with the publishers still making a living out of it. Nevertheless, it is a proposition which in the end becomes a question of individual judgement: Is it worth a subscription of ten shillings a week to my library? Which is where we came in. But the publishers, at 11, Belgrave Road, London, S.W.1., will be delighted to answer any question or to give more information.

The latest Britannica—by subscription

THE publishers of the Encyclopaedia Britannica are shortly to announce a plan which will give any library—from the smallest “special” to the largest university or public library—the chance to obtain the latest revisions of Britannica every two years, for a price that is the equivalent of less than ten shillings a week.

Far cry from 1768

Every Registration student who knows his encyclopaedias will recall the fact that *E.B.* started in a small way with three volumes published between 1768-1771. There is nothing small about the 1959 *E.B.* Its latest printing occupies 24 volumes; they stretch solidly along five feet of shelves; and they contain 38 million words—although we admit we did not actually check this last point. The London contribution issues from a suite of offices in Belgravia where a staff of 50 edits, checks and co-ordinates the output of several thousand contributors and consultants.

There may be some perfectly valid criticisms of Britannica as an encyclopaedia (as well, perhaps, as some less defensible prejudices). Critics will quote this or that edition of *E.B.* against its publishers, and there are, too, some understandable yearnings for a purely national encyclopaedia to match those of Germany, France and Italy. But the total effort which is currently going into this production of an encyclopaedia “for the English-speaking world” is, to say the least, impressive.

That figure of 38 million words starts to make sense when expressed as a round total of 43,000 articles; when the editor talks of a “classification” for these articles one begins to feel almost at home. A series of Classifications, broad subject headings, is used—including one which must have justified itself time and again, Miscellaneous—and it is one of the major tasks of the editorial staff in the London offices to fit into this framework the articles commissioned from the contributors. Those articles which date rapidly are placed in a special out-of-classification category for more frequent revision.

Labour of keeping abreast

One of the important criteria for assessing the success of any encyclopaedia is its “up-to-dateness”, and *E.B.*’s well advertised method of meeting this problem is continuous revision. To the publishers this means revising or rewriting between five and six million words a year. In terms of articles revised, a fresh printing is produced nearly each year which will have had roughly one sixth of its total content overhauled since the previous year. Since, however, some Classifications—notably those concerning science and technology—need revising more frequently than others, a completely new edition of *Britannica* cannot emerge every sixth year.

It is the publisher’s intention to provide subscribers to their new plan with a list in some detail of each year’s revisions within the Classifications; this would help librarians to decide whether or not to continue the subscriptions which would provide them with the latest printing of the encyclopaedia.

A factor which can affect significantly whether such a work as *E.B.* is up-to-date is, of course, its editorial policy. Britannica’s publishers aim to produce an encyclopaedia which is appropriate to the mid-twentieth century” and this policy is claimed to underlie the revision of the articles themselves, their attendant bibliographies and the Classifications into which they are absorbed. Inevitably, the process takes toll of many of the monumental contributions which distinguished earlier editions (particularly the 9th, 11th, and 14th). But there is a safeguard, say the publishers: we will always supply a photocopy of any article now only available in a previous edition.

Fortified—perhaps even a little horrified—by this mountainous labour, the publishers have decided to make it a point of honour, as part of their general promotional plans for Britannica, to place it in as many libraries as possible throughout the country. And for this purpose they are using a sweeping definition of the term “library” which takes in everything from the one-man-band and upwards.

The plan in £ s. d.

This Library Subscription Service is appealingly simple. A subscribing library will receive the current edition of Britannica on payment of £25. Twelve months later a further £25 will become due, and at the end of a two-year period, the set will be replaced by the then current edition. Alternatively, should a library wish to discontinue the subscription after any two year period, during which time they will have paid £50, they can purchase the set already in their possession for a further £15. This set can either be retained by the library which bought it, or passed to another library within the jurisdiction of the librarian, who, in turn, could then take out a fresh subscription of £25 to the latest revised printing of Britannica. Additionally, the Yearbooks which contain statistical, economic and chronological data for the previous year, will be available to subscribing libraries at the concessional price of three guineas.

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